

Chair and members of the committee:

My name is Ted Chu. I am a full time resident of Tillamook County. I am an outdoorsman and a life long hunter. In 2020 I hunted grouse, quail and elk in Oregon. I am a wildlife biologist by passion and profession now semi-retired. My comments will be brief.

I support HB2728 which would prohibit coyote killing contests in Oregon as they are currently prohibited in our neighboring states of Washington and California and several other states.

I taught hunter safety and ethics for a number of years. Although this was before the emergence of coyote killing contests, as instructors we unknowingly at the time emphasized hunting ethics and practices that are the antithesis of such events. We encouraged our young students to limit their kills, not to maximize them. We urged them to kill only what they or their family could use and to learn good field dressing and butchering skills resulting in healthy delicious table fare to be shared with family and friends. We discouraged the use of live animals simply for targets even when doing so was legal. We underscored that hunting is not a contest to see who can kill the highest numbers of animals.

Hunting is under constant public review however most criticism of hunting is not directed toward legal pursuit of species that are commonly hunted for food. It is the indiscriminate killing of other species, primarily native predators, that generates the most negativity. Making a contest for prizes of such killing is particularly abhorrent to many people. This is not hunting. It is just killing. These contests are very harmful to the image of hunting and hunters.

The coyote is a valuable native species with a highly varied diet consisting primarily of rodents but also including carrion, berries and game species. There is little if any science suggesting that they depress game populations in good habitat. Most Oregonians enjoy seeing them and everyone loves hearing them at night on camping trips. They deserve better treatment and more respect than what is granted in contests designed to reward killing as many of them as possible.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to participate in our democracy and for listening.

Ted Chu
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